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These facts all tend to show that the Creeks anciently had made some endeavors to record their history and serve to strengthen our respect for certain of the features of their migration legends. It will also prevent us from dismissing as an altogether idle tale De la Vente's assertion that the Natchez had preserved a record of 45 or 50 of their Great Suns.¹⁵ At the best the attempts were, of course, crude, but in Peru the device of the quipu seems to have preserved a great amount of extremely valuable history extending to a remote antiquity.

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Before white contact value was measured by means of shell money, but we have not from the southern Indians as full an account of this as from the northern Indians. The following from Adair contains nearly all that we know about it:

"Before we supplied them with our European beads, they had great quantities of wampum; (the Buccinum of the ancients) made out of conch-shell, by rubbing them on hard stones, and so they form them according to their liking. With these they bought and sold at a stated current rate, without the least variation for circumstances, either of time or place; and now they will hear nothing patiently of loss or gain, or allow us to heighten the price of our goods, be our reasons ever so strong, or though the exigencies and changes of time may require it. Formerly, four deer-skins was the price of a large conch-shell bead, about the length and thickness of a man's forefinger; which they fixed to the crown of their head, as an high ornament—so greatly they valued them."¹⁶

GAMES

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As with so many other American tribes, the two-goal ball game, resembling in many respects that known as lacrosse, was the leading game among southern Indians. I will begin an account of it by prefixing Adair's description as he witnessed it among the Chickasaw, though the Creek game as it has come down to us differed in several important particulars. He says:

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"The Indians are much addicted to gaming, and will often stake every thing they possess. Ball-playing is their chief and most favourite game; and is such severe exercise, as to shew it was originally calculated for a hardy and expert race of people, like themselves, and the ancient Spartans. The ball is made of a piece of scraped deer-skin, moistened, and stuffed hard with deer's hair, and strongly sewed with deer's sinews. The ball-sticks are about two feet long, the lower end somewhat resembling the palm of a hand, and which are worked with deer-skin thongs. Between these, they catch the ball, and throw it a great distance, when not prevented by some of the opposite party, who fly to intercept them. The goal is about

¹⁵ Comptes Rendus Cong. Internat. des Amér., 18th ann., vol. 1, p. 37.

¹⁶ Adair, Hist. Am. Inds., p. 170. Cf. also Lawson, Hist. Car., pp. 315-317. The use of the term "wampum" here is erroneous: wampum was of a wholly different type.